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Letters to the editor

JFK assassination

The American News Service commentary you published Nov. 30 is a typical example of what happens when political preconceptions — on the subject of the assassination of President Kennedy, really political yearnings — render fact irrelevant. People state as unquestioned fact what they want to believe and have others believe, what is exactly opposite unquestioned, established fact.

Basic in this anti-Marxist effort to make it appear that Marxists assassinated JFK are two statements that simply are not true. I really question whether the author of this commentary has any knowledge of the fact at all or is merely repeating like-minded and similarly uninformed writers of the past.

"Based on the available evidence, the conclusion that Oswald shot the President has stood up" and "efforts to explain away the ballistics and other data are not persuasive," ANS says. Neither statement is true, although it is true that they reflect the conclusions of the Warren Commission — with which, I add, neither the J. Edgar Hoover FBI nor the Secret Service agreed.

Making full factual response would require the length of several large books, there is that much information now available. In my own archive about a half-million pages of records I obtained by lengthy and extensive Freedom of Information action to which ANS, like anyone else, has the access it has not asked for. Without examination of this extensive material and the also extensive litigation involving the two ANS statements I quote verbatim above, it is not possible to make a responsible statement and represent it as unquestionable fact.

There are two simple tests ANS could have made on its own if it is unwilling to credit the tests made for the Commission by the National Rifle Association and Army experts at Aberdeen Proving Grounds. Let ANS get its own Mannlicher-Carcano, a very poor rifle known as Mussolini's contribution to humanitarian warfare, put a telescopic sight on it, and get the best experts available to try to duplicate the shooting attributed to Oswald. It simply is not possible and every effort to duplicate it has failed.

ANS can find the results of the work by the Army and the NRA shooters, all "masters," in the Commission's published exhibits. It will find that even the world's best shots, under less than comparable, really much improved, conditions and circumstances, could not duplicate the shooting attributed to Oswald, who was both unpracticed and at best a lousy shot.

After I spoke at Hood the night of the 14th, a retired police sergeant told me (unsolicitedly) that he had been part of one such effort, made by the White Laboratories near Baltimore for CBS-TV, and he was outraged by both the dishonesty of preparation and conditions, which included almost remaking the rifle used, and the results, which leave it without doubt that it is simply impossible for *anybody* to shoot as the official account has Oswald shooting.

What the ballistics data really establish is the absolute impossibility of what is basic to the official conclusion, that the Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5mm bullet enjoyed a spectacular, bone-smashing career, unequaled in either science or mythology, and emerged in almost perfect condition, without a visible scratch on it.

For the official account to be true, this bullet has to have been unscathed after going through the President near the base of the neck, striking bone there; then to have smashed four inches of Governor Connally's fifth rib; then to have gone through his wrist and smashed all those heavy bones; then to have gone two inches into his thigh and left a fragment at the bone.

Even when the Army tried to duplicate this career one wound at a time — it never did try to have the one bullet inflict all seven wounds because it was known that the bullet did not have that penetrating power — there was always extensive deformity and mutilation. I'm certain the hunters in your readership will be aware that mutilation and deformity are inevitable.

The same is true of ANS's representation of Oswald as a "dedicated" and a "fanatical Marxist." This is the official line, based on his self-description as a Marxist for his own purpose — and there remain substantial questions about why he engaged in some of his political activities. In his own writings Oswald condemned both the American and Russian Communists. He denounced the Americans as betrayers of the working class and lackeys of the Russians and the Russians as "fat, stinking politicians."

The late conservative Senator Richard B. Russell told me that the executive agencies "have not told us all they know about Oswald." Russell was both a member of the Commission and head of the Senate intelligence oversight committee. To his dying day he encouraged my work. After he died I did learn more about Oswald's past that the agencies withheld from the Commission and the country.

Although his Marine's personnel record was arranged to hide it, Oswald had the highest security clearances. In his daily work he had knowledge of the most significant secrets and codes. He had no Marine assignment that was not connected with the CIA. Yet never once, so far as is known, did he ever mention any of this to anyone or indicate it in his writings.

He required and had "confidential" clearance to take basic radar training. Thereafter he was sent to an advanced school and emerged trained for what one of his associates described as "black box stuff." He was one of five men in each of only three units of 100 who had this special training and highest clearance, "Crypto," which in turn required Top Secret clearance. His first assignment was to Atsugi, Japan, which was a major U-2 base. His records then show only maneuvers on the high seas but in fact, the sworn — and ignored — testimony of his associates, they spent a six-month period at another major CIA base, Cubi Point, Philippines. Before and after Cubi, Oswald and his companions were part of the CIA's effort to overthrow the leftist Indonesian government headed by Sukarno.

Instead of sounding off unfactually to advance its own preconceptions and political beliefs, ANS and those who hold similar views might well conduct their own inquiries to determine why the government withheld such significant information about the official candidate for assassin, why the FBI, Secret Service, two Presidential commissions, the Navy, the Marines and the Air Force, all of which had responsibilities in the in-

vestigations, never once reported this significant information. They withheld what they knew and were party to misleading and misinforming the world.

The proof confirming the testimony I refer to is in the Navy's files, from which, under FOIA, I obtained it.

By coincidence, when I aired some of this the night of the 20th anniversary, a Marine phoned in to state of his own knowledge that both then and now the kind of job Oswald had in the Marines required both "Crypto" and "Top Secret" clearances.

In even the most minor details ANS misleads. For example, in referring to Oswald's wife's uncle, it states that he was "a KGB official." Few Americans will understand this to mean other than he was an official of the Russian spy outfit. In fact, the KGB is also the equivalent of our Interior Department, and her uncle was in the kind of work, not spying.

It is a fabrication and a libel of such staunch anti-Communists as Senator Russell and his fellow Commissioners to present a fabrication as fact, that the Commission received and obeyed "instructions from above to 'avoid the Communist angle.'" I regret that ANS has seen fit to fabricate and make the other errors and present them to trusting editors and readers.

The assassination of any president is the most subversive of crimes. It and its consequences ought not ever be addressed — by officials, serious writers or political commentators — with other than complete devotion to fact and truth. It certainly ought not be a matter about which the people are misled in any way or misused as political propaganda.

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